

Meiji-era publications acquired by OSU Libraries

by Maureen Donovan

In Spring 2007, my grant application to the North American Coordinating Council for Japanese Library Resources (NCC) for partial support of a project to acquire and catalog a microfiche collection of Meiji-era (1868-1912) publications was successful, endorsing efforts at Ohio State to improve scholarly access to Meiji publications.

Japanese libraries are digitizing Meiji publications and publishing them on the Internet. Although rare books from the Meiji period were quite inaccessible only a short time ago, increasingly one has to think about Meiji publications as relatively easy to get from anywhere in the world! For example, National Diet Library (NDL) provides more than 97,000 titles (143,000 volumes) of Meiji publications through its Kindai Digital Library. Meiji Gakuin University Library Digital Archives provide a digital edition of James Curtis Hepburn's (1815-1911) *A Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary*, an important resource for Japanese language during the Meiji period.

In contrast to the NDL project, which is limited to books available in their collections, the publisher Yushodo undertook a project to microfilm all Meiji publications, drawing on the holdings of several libraries. Known as JMSTC (Japan Meiji Short Title Catalog) or *Meijiki Kankobutsu Shusei*, this project has thus far covered only the fields of language and literature. Titles included in the 94 units comprising JMSTC are from the following library collections: Waseda University (8,672 titles), Tenri University 1,605 t), University of California, Berkeley (2,139 t.), Keio University (168 t), Kansai University (282 t.).

Ohio State University Libraries began purchasing the JMSTC microfiche set in 1992. The NCC grant just received provided partial support (75%) for Units 85-94. The grant funds were matched with Libraries' discretionary funds by James K. Bracken (Professor and Assistant Director, Collections, Instruction and Public Services). The OSU Libraries also provided similar special funding at several other times during the fifteen years that it took to acquire this resource. The total cost for JMSTC was 36,845,519 yen (approximately \$318,600).

To improve access, the Libraries is cataloging all of JMSTC's 12,866 titles, with a goal to complete this within four years. Sherab Chen (Assistant Professor and Non-Roman Cataloging Coordinator) is directing this project. Students working with him are researching authors' names and solving bibliographic problems posed by conventions of Meiji-era publishing. As titles are cataloged, records are input into OCLC's Worldcat and in Ohio State's library catalog. Already about 3,000 titles have been cataloged.

Web resources mentioned:

James Curtis Hepburn (1815-1911). *A Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary*
<http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/mgda/index.htm> (in Japanese)

National Diet Library.
Kindai Digital Library
<http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/> (in Japanese)

Yushodo. Meijiki Kankobutsu Shusei
<http://yushodo.co.jp/micro/ken-saku/meiji-1.html> (in Japanese)

OCLC's Worldcat
<http://www.worldcat.org>